

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method to provide access to services of ~~an online commerce site~~ a network-based auction site that includes a plurality of servers, the method comprising:
receiving an access request from a client, the access request including an API function call;
identifying an API server of the plurality of servers to which to direct the client for service by the ~~online commerce site~~ network-based auction site;
generating an access rule associated with the client, the API function call, and the API server; and
transmitting the access rule to the client.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the API server of the plurality of servers is identified based on the identity of the client.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the plurality of servers includes a second server that provides a service level different from that of the API server, and wherein the access rule is associated with the client based on a service level agreement between the client and the online commerce site.
4. (Canceled).
5. (Canceled).
6. (Canceled).
7. (Canceled).

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further including searching a database table for a record containing an access rule to reply to the client.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the access rule includes a URL.
10. (Withdrawn) A method to facilitate access to an online commerce site, the method including:
 - receiving a request from a client at the online commerce site for an access rule; and
 - replying to the request with the access rule, the access rule being to direct the client to an API server upon performing an API function call.
11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the API function call is to perform a function to facilitate the online commerce.
12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the API function call is to retrieve information regarding items that are available for transaction via the online commerce site.
13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the access rule includes a URL that addresses the API server.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the access rule includes a CallName that describes the API function call associated with the access rule being returned.
15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the request includes an application ID to identify the access rule being returned.
16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the request includes a developer ID to identify the access rule being returned.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the request includes a session certificate in order to validate the client making the request.
18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 further including:
responsive to receiving the request from the client, searching a database table for a record containing the access rule to reply to the client.
19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the searching of the database table is to locate an access rule based on an identity of the client.
20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 wherein the online commerce site includes a plurality of API servers, and the access rule is to direct the client to the API server in order to provide the client with a predetermined level of service associated with the API server.
21. (Currently Amended) A method to facilitate access to services on ~~an online commerce site~~ a network-based auction site, the method comprising:
receiving a service request from a client for access to a service on an API server supporting the ~~online commerce site~~ network-based auction site, the service request including at least a portion of an access rule associated with the client, an API function call, and the API server, the access rule having been previously provided to the client by the ~~online commerce site~~ network-based auction site; and
validating the service request based on the access rule.
22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein the validating includes validating the service request based on whether a URL in the access rule is associated with the API server.
23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the access request includes an application identifier.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the access request includes a developer identifier.
25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the access request includes a session certificate.
26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein the access rule includes a CallName.
27. (Original) The method of claim 21 further including providing the access to the service.
28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein the API server is an online auction server.
29. (Withdrawn) A method to facilitate access to an online commerce site, the method including:
 requesting an access rule from a server;
 receiving the access rule, the access rule includes a URL of an API server; and
 performing an API function call to the URL of the API server.
30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29 further includes storing the access rule in a data store.
31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30 further including obtaining the URL associated to the API function from the access rule stored in the data store.
32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29 wherein the requesting being periodically scheduled to be performed.

33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29 wherein the server is an online commerce auction server.

34. (Withdrawn) A method to facilitate access to an online commerce site, the method including:

searching for an access rule in a data store, the access rule includes a URL of an API server; and
performing an API function call to the URL of the API server.

35. (Withdrawn) A method to facilitate access to an online commerce site, the method including:

receiving a request from a client to perform a transaction on a server;
determining the client has not exceeded a maximum rate usage level; and
performing the requested transaction.

36. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of transactions.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of calls per day.

38. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of calls per hour.

39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of simultaneous calls.

40. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the maximum rate usage level the time of day.

41. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the request is from an API function call.
42. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the server is an online auction server.
43. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 wherein the performing includes increasing the rate usage counter and returning a number of transaction results up to the number the maximum rate usage.
44. (Withdrawn) A system, including:
 - a network;
 - an application server capable of making a API function call; and
 - an API server to transmit an access rule to the application server via the network upon receiving a request for the access rule from the application server, the access rule includes a URL.
45. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 44 wherein the API server validates the API function call based on whether an identifier stored in the request is associated with an identifier stored in the access rule.
46. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 45 wherein the API server validates the API function call based on whether the URL in the access rule is associated with the API server.
47. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 44 wherein the API function call is via a URL request string.
48. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 44 wherein the application server stores the retrieved access rule in a data store.

49. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 44 wherein the application server obtains the URL from the retrieved access rule to determine an API server to make a transaction request within an API function call.
50. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 44 wherein the API server receives the transaction request and performs the transaction request upon determining whether the maximum usage rate limit is not exceeded.
51. (Withdrawn) A machine-readable medium having executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method including:
receiving a request from a client at an online commerce site for an access rule; and
replying to the request with the access rule, the access rule being to direct the client to an API server upon performing an API function call.
52. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the API function call is to perform a function to facilitate the online commerce.
53. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the API function call is to retrieve information regarding items that are available for transaction via the online commerce site.
54. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the access rule includes a URL that addresses the API server.
55. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the access rule includes a CallName.
56. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the request includes an application ID to identify the client.

57. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the request includes a developer ID to identify the client.
58. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the request includes a session certificate to identify the client.
59. (Withdrawn) The machine readable medium of claim 51 further including:
responsive to receiving the request from the client, searching a database table for a record containing the access rule to reply to the client.
60. (Withdrawn) The machine readable medium of claim 51 wherein the searching of the database table is to locate an access rule based on an identity of the client.
61. (Withdrawn) The machine readable medium of claim 51 wherein the online commerce site includes a plurality of API servers, and the access rule is to direct the client to the API server in order to provide the client with a predetermined level of service associated with the API server.
62. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage medium having executable instructions to cause a machine to:
receive a service access request from a client for access to a service on an API server supporting ~~the online commerce site~~ a network-based auction site, the service request including at least a portion of an access rule associated with the client, an API function call, and the API server, the access rule having been previously provided to the client by the ~~online commerce site~~ network-based auction site; and
validate the service request based on the access rule.

63. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the executable instructions being further operable to validate the service request based on whether a URL in the access rule is associated with the API server.

64. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the service access request includes an application identifier.

65. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the service access request includes a developer identifier.

66. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the service access request includes a session certificate.

67. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the access rule includes a CallName.

68. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the executable instructions being further operable to provide the access to the service.

69. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ machine readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the API server is in communication with an online auction server.

70. (Withdrawn) A machine readable medium having executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method including:

requesting an access rule from a server;

receiving the access rule, the access rule includes a URL of an API server; and

performing an API function call to the URL of the API server.

71. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 70 further includes storing the access rule in a data store.

72. (Withdrawn) The machine readable medium of claim 71 further including obtaining the URL associated to the API function from the access rule stored in the data store.
73. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 70 wherein the requesting periodically scheduled to be performed.
74. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 70 wherein the server is an online commerce auction server.
75. (Withdrawn) A machine-readable medium having executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method including:
searching for an access rule in a data store, the access rule includes a URL of an API server; and
performing an API function call to the URL of the API server.
76. (Withdrawn) A machine-readable medium having executable instructions to cause a machine to perform a method including:
receiving a request from a client to perform a transaction on a server; determining the client has not exceeded a maximum rate usage level; and
performing the requested transaction.
77. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of transactions.
78. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of calls per day.
79. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of calls per hour.

80. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the maximum rate usage level is a maximum number of simultaneous calls.
81. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the maximum rate usage level the time of day.
82. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the request is from an API function call.
83. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the server is an online auction server.
84. (Withdrawn) The machine-readable medium of claim 76 wherein the performing includes increasing the rate usage counter and returning a number of transaction results up to the number the maximum rate usage.
85. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage medium having executable instructions to cause a machine to:
- receive an access request from a client for access to services of ~~an online commerce site~~ a network-based auction site that includes a plurality of servers, the access request including an API function call;
 - identify an API server of the plurality of servers to which to direct the client for service by the ~~online commerce site~~ network-based auction site;
 - generate an access rule associated with the client, the API function call, and the API server; and
 - transmit the access rule to the client.